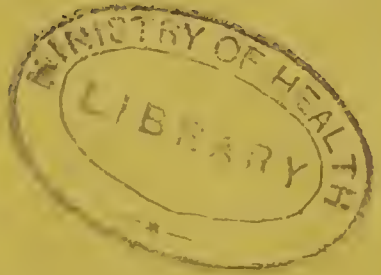
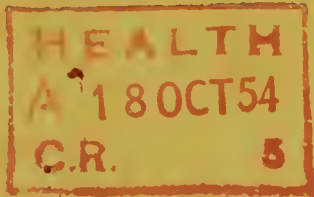


RURAL DISTRICT OF BATTLE



Annual Report
of the
Medical Officer of Health
for the year 1953

BY

M. I. SILVERTON, T.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

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THE RURAL DISTRICT OF BATTLE

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

(constitution at 31st December, 1953)

Chairman:

THE HON. MISS E. D. COURTHOPE

Vice-Chairman:

MR. A. C. McCRAE

MR. C. H. BARHAM

MR. G. BARLING, J.P.

MR. S. J. COMBER

COMDR. C. V. JACK, O.B.E.

MR. G. MIGHALL

SIR ALAN MOORE, Bt., M.B., D.P.H.

MR. E. A. PAINE

COMDR. J. D. ROSS

MR. H. W. G. TAYLOR

MRS. M. WEST, J.P.

MRS. E. WOODGATE

STAFF OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Medical Officer of Health:

M. I. Silvertown, T.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Senior Sanitary Inspector:

W. Francis, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Sanitary Inspectors:

W. T. Dunford, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A., M.R.San.I.

K. G. Bewick, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A., M.R.San.I.

R. E. Briggs, D.P.A., Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A., A.R.San.I.

G. J. Allen, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

Clerical Staff:

Chief Clerk: Miss M. E. Portnell

Diphtheria Immunisation and Vaccination Clerk:

*Miss M. H. Hearnshaw

Shorthand-Typists and General Clerks:

Mrs. E. G. Kemp

Miss W. R. Burt

Miss M. C. Laird

Mr. I. W. Mason (to 31/7/53)

Rat Catchers: Mr. A. J. French (to 27/5/1953)

Mr. R. Elliott

*County Staff employed locally

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND COUNCILLORS OF BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL.

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1953, this being the 20th year since the formation of this District.

The statistics reveal that the health of the District compares favourably with the rest of England and Wales. A comparable series of figures (where available) relating to the year 1934 when this District was formed is included.

The immunisation campaign against Diphtheria has proved so successful that no cases have been reported in this District for the past eight years.

Water and sewerage schemes have made headway and the coming year should see a considerable amelioration in the dangers and discomforts endured by the communities of hitherto unwatered and unsewered parishes.

New housing has been pushed ahead and the speedy rehousing of young families living in conditions militating against their welfare has been much appreciated.

The Sanitary Inspectors, under the able leadership of Mr. Francis (Chief Sanitary Inspector), have continued to give of their best, their unfailing interest and co-operation is a potent influence in promoting the health of this District.

The Chief Clerk (Miss Portnell) and the Office Staff have been most assiduous in their duties.

The success of the Immunisation campaign against Diphtheria owes much to the conscientious and careful work of the Immunisation Clerk (Miss Hearnshaw).

I am obliged to the Clerk of the Council and other Chief Officers for their co-operation at all times.

I am grateful to the Councillors, and in particular, the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee, for their stimulating interest and support.

I have the honour to be, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

M. I. SILVERTON,

Medical Officer of Health.

The Watch Oak,
Battle, Sussex.

STATISTICS RELATING TO BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT

	1934	1951	1952	1953
Area of district in acres (estimated)	119,972	117,147*	117,147	117,147
Population (Registrar General's estimate for mid-year)	28,991	29,960	29,770	29,700
Rateable Value	£174,408	£215,904	£219,960	£225,305
Sum represented by a penny rate	£670	£872	£875	£895
Number of rateable premises at 1st April ..	9,976	11,427	11,484	11,690

*The Hastings Corporation (General Powers) Act, 1937, was responsible for the diminution in area.

BIRTHS AND BIRTH RATES

	1934			1953		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<i>Live Births:</i>						
Legitimate	171	138	309	180	179	359
Illegitimate	10	16	26	9	11	20
	181	154	335	189	190	379
<i>Stillbirths:</i>						
Legitimate	3	5	8	5	0	5
Illegitimate	0	0	0	0	1	1
	3	5	8	5	1	6

	1934		1953	
	Battle R.D.	England and Wales	Battle R.D.	England and Wales
Live birth rate per 1,000 home population	13.3	14.8	12.76	15.5
Corrected birth rate	Not available	—	14.67	—
Still birth rate per 1,000 births (live and still)	23.32	Not available	15.58	22.4
Still birth rate per 1,000 home population	0.2	—	0.2	0.35

The increased proportion of aged people in the population of this District will account for the apparently decreased birth rate as compared with England and Wales, the Corrected Birth Rate discounts this bias and makes it possible to compare these figures on the basis of similarly constituted populations.

Similarly the Death Rate is "Corrected" in order to be comparable with that for England and Wales.

DEATHS AND DEATH RATES

	1934		1953	
	<i>Battle R.D.</i>	<i>England and Wales</i>	<i>Battle R.D.</i>	<i>England and Wales</i>
DEATH RATES:				
Death Rate per 1,000 of resident population	13.09	11.8	14.43	11.4
Corrected death rate	10.73	—	10.38	—
Deaths of infants under 1 year	12	35,017	7	18,180
Death rate of infants under 1 year per 1,000 live births ..	35.82	59.0	18.46	26.8
Death rate for diarrhoea (infants under 2 years) per 1,000 live births	Nil	5.35	Nil	1.1
Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live and still births ..	Nil	4.62	Nil	0.76

The most striking reduction in deaths over the years being in infants under one year, and although our figures are small to be of much value statistically in themselves, it will be noted that this trend is confirmed when the figures for England and Wales are compared in the years under review.

It has been accepted that the infant mortality rate is probably the most informative index we possess when assessing the sanitary and social circumstances of a district, *e.g.* poor housing, overcrowding, defective sanitation. Parental ignorance and neglect are potent factors in raising the rate.

The decrease in the Maternal Mortality Rate is a tribute in part to the work done by the local health authorities in providing midwives and ante-natal clinics, plus the advent of new life saving drugs, *e.g.* sulphonamides and penicillin.

DEATH RATES FROM SPECIFIC CAUSES

	England and Wales	Battle R.D.
Typhoid and paratyphoid	0.00	—
Whooping cough	0.01	—
Diphtheria	0.00	—
Tuberculosis	0.20	0.13
Influenza	0.16	0.06
Smallpox	0.00	—
Acute poliomyelitis & polioencephalitis	0.01	—
Pneumonia	0.55	0.37

DETAILED CAUSES OF DEATH

	Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	0	3	3
Tuberculosis, other	1	0	1
Syphilitic disease	2	1	3
Measles	2	0	2
Other infective and parasitic diseases	0	2	2
Malignant neoplasms	27	31	58
Leukaemia and aleukaemia	2	1	3
Diabetes	0	2	2
Vascular lesions of nervous system	21	47	68
Coronary disease, angina	28	15	43
Hypertension with heart disease	9	4	13
Other heart disease	49	57	106
Other circulatory disease	9	12	21
Influenza	1	1	2
Pneumonia	7	4	11
Bronchitis	3	4	7
Other diseases of the respiratory system	3	0	3
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	3	1	4
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	1	2	3
Nephritis and nephrosis	4	2	6
Hyperplasia of prostate	2	0	2
Congenital malformations	4	1	5
Other defined or ill-defined diseases	17	28	45
Motor vehicle accidents	0	2	2
All other accidents	2	4	6
Suicide	6	0	6
Homicide	0	1	1
	203	225	428

MAIN CAUSES OF DEATH

	1953	1952
(i) Diseases of the heart and circulatory system	183 (42.7%)	172 (43.9%)
(ii) Vascular lesions of the nervous system	68 (15.8%)	45 (11.4%)
(iii) Malignant neoplasms (cancer)	58 (13.5%)	59 (14.9%)
(iv) Respiratory diseases (excluding tuberculosis)	23 (5.3%)	30 (7.8%)

DEATHS—65 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER

	Total Deaths, 1952	No. of Deaths 65 years and over	Per-centage of Total Deaths	Total Deaths, 1953	No. of Deaths 65 years and over	Per-centage of Total Deaths
Battle R.D. ..	394	278	70.5	428	322	75.2
England and Wales..	40,368	26,786	66.3	38,636	25,821	66.8

TUBERCULOSIS

	Pulmonary Cases			Non-Pulmonary Cases			Total Cases (all forms)		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
1. No. on Register at 1st January, 1953 ..	64	67	131	16	19	35	80	86	166
2. Cases previously removed and renotified in 1953 ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
3. Primary notifications received in 1953 ..	3	4	7	3	2	5	6	6	12
4. Cases moved into area as transfers ..	3	6	9	—	2	2	3	8	11
Totals	71	77	148	19	23	42	90	100	190
*5. Cases removed from Register in 1953 ..	15	21	36	5	9	14	20	30	50
6. Number on Register at 31st December, 1953	56	56	112	14	14	28	70	70	140

One non-pulmonary case discovered after death—see Table “ Detailed Causes of Death ”

*ANALYSIS OF REMOVALS IN 1953

(See paragraph 5 in above table)

	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Total Cases (all forms)		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	Total
Left District	12	15	2	1	14	16	20
Cured	—	3	3	8	3	11	14
Died	†3	3	—	—	3	3	6
	15	21	5	9	20	30	50

†One patient died from causes other than tuberculosis; two deaths related to persons not normally resident in this District and they therefore do not appear in the Table for Detailed Causes of Death.

Tabulated lists (in age groups) of New Cases notified in this District and all Deaths during the current year :

Age	NEW CASES (PRIMARY NOTIFICATIONS)				ALL DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
3—5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6—10	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
11—15	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
16—25	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
26—35	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
36—45	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
46—60	—	2	—	—	—	1	—	—
Over 60	1	1	2	—	—	1	—	—
Totals	4	5	3	1	—	3	1	—

INCIDENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1934 AND THE YEARS
1948-1953—1st JANUARY-31st DECEMBER

	1934	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
Diphtheria (a)	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acute poliomyelitis (b)	1	0	1	3	0	8	7
Meningococcal infection	1	1	0	3	1	2	1
Measles (c)	—*	221	422	69	410	190	1,051
Scarlet Fever (d)	25	13	32	35	22	87	29
Whooping cough	—*	108	42	162	251	72	214
Acute pneumonia	8	8	23	23	25	34	29
Erysipelas	4	6	6	8	2	7	3
Puerperal pyrexia	3	2	1	0	1	3	0
Dysentery (e)	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Food poisoning (e)	1	0	0	1	5	0	2
Acute encephalitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

*There are no figures available for Measles and Whooping Cough for 1934 as these infectious diseases were made notifiable in 1940.

(a) Diphtheria

In 1934 there were six cases in Battle Rural District, whereas it is gratifying to note that for the past six years this District has been free from this disease.

The average deaths for England and Wales for the period 1931-1940 was 2,800 per year. The deaths for the current year (England and Wales) were 23.

There is no doubt that immunisation is responsible for this dramatic reduction in mortality.

Relevant statistics are given on page 14.

(b) Acute Poliomyelitis

There were seven cases of poliomyelitis (one non-paralytic and six paralytic) during 1953, with no evidence of spread within the Rural District.

Two cases were not ordinarily resident in this District and were considered to be incubating the disease on arrival, the Medical Officers of Health of their respective districts were notified. Unfortunately, one case died; the other made a complete recovery.

Two of the remaining cases have considerable residual disability, the three others made good recoveries.

Only two of the patients lived in the same parish but no definite connection between them could be established. One case near the Hailsham Rural District border did have some contact with a member of a family living in the Hailsham district, where a case of poliomyelitis was confirmed, and it is assumed that this was the most likely origin of this infection.

No connection between immunisation or any other operative procedure and subsequent poliomyelitis was discovered.

(c) Measles

There was a sharply increased incidence in 1953 in contrast to the previous year. Nine hundred and sixty cases or 91% of the total number occurred in the first quarter of the year.

There were two deaths of children aged 1 year and 6 months, and 2 years, who were inmates of a private Home for mentally defective children (this Home is now closed).

There were three admissions to hospital, one child being admitted because of accidental burns complicating the measles; a second child was admitted because of difficulty in home nursing (Furze House, Ticehurst) and one adult who had a complicating pneumonia. All these cases made good recoveries.

It will be noted that on the whole this epidemic was remarkable for its mildness despite the numbers involved.

It is already evident that 1954 will show a substantial decrease.

(d) Scarlet Fever

There was a marked decrease during 1953. The disease was mild in character, one case only being admitted to hospital. This child made a good recovery without complications.

(e) Dysentery and Food Poisoning

Total No. of Outbreaks	No. of Cases	No. of Deaths	Organisms or Other Agents responsible	Foods Involved	Result
(1) One family	4 cases (1 notified)	Nil	Salmonella typhi-murium	Not known	Free from infection
(2) One	42 cases (1 notified)	Nil	(a) Salmonella typhi-murium (b) Shigella sonnei	Not known	Residual carriers still under observation

It will be noted that 42 cases were found in a Hospital for Mental Defectives.

Investigations revealed that sporadic enteritis had been occurring among the patients and staff for 10 days prior to the receipt of the notification (14th September, 1953) and that they were in the midst of being treated with Cremosuxidine.

The following action was taken:—

1. No patients were to be allowed to handle food or to work in the kitchen; the Superintendent and Matron were advised regarding the provision of more hygienic equipment in the kitchen and strict personal health discipline in kitchen workers. (All measures advised were accepted by the Hospital Management Committee.)
2. Food supplies were investigated with negative results.
3. The Area Superintendent of a Pest Destruction Company (under contract with the Hospital) made a full survey on 21st September, 1953; he stated that "infestation was negligible." However, the premises were retreated as a safety measure.
4. All five members of the kitchen staff were sampled and the opportunity taken to give them a talk on personal hygiene. A kitchen-maid found to be excreting salmonella typhi-murium was excluded, referred to her own doctor and eventually left this employment. She was treated with Chloromycetin Palmitate and declared free from infection, 17th October, 1953, after successive negative stools.

The father of this girl was interviewed and stated that he had had diarrhoea intermittently for the past 12 months. He and the other members of his family were sampled with negative results.

5. Nursing staff (although understaffed) were divided into "clean and dirty."
6. All stools and soiled laundry were to be treated as for "enteric fever."

Following the treatment of the whole staff and all patients with Chloromycetin Palmitate in October, 1953, samples were taken and again at regular intervals thereafter. During the regular sampling, carriers of *Shigella sonnei* were discovered.

There were no more *Salmonella typhi-murium* carriers after 28th May, 1954, but one carrier of *Shigella sonnei* remained.

This hospital is still under surveillance.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN AGE GROUPS

	Under 1 year	1-2 years	3-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	65 and over	Totals
Scarlet fever ..	—	2	7	16	1	2	1	—	—	29
Whooping Cough ..	19	35	51	99	7	—	3	—	—	214
Acute poliomyelitis	—	—	2	1	—	1	2	1	—	7
Measles ..	20	140	210	549	96	9	23	4	—	1,051
Pneumonia ..	1	2	—	3	1	3	4	9	6	29
Acute encephalitis ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Erysipelas ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Meningococcal infection ..	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Food poisoning	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	2
Totals ..	40	179	270	669	105	16	34	17	7	1,337

**DISTRIBUTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES
IN THE VARIOUS PARISHES**

	Measles	Whooping Cough	Scarlet Fever	Acute Pneumonia	Erysipelas	Acute Polio- myelitis	Meningo- coccal Infect.	Food Poisoning	Acute encephalitis	Estimated Population
Ashburnham ..	—	—	—	—	—	I	—	—	—	380
Battle ..	119	19	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	4,371
Beckley ..	75	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	962
Bodiam ..	—	2	—	—	—	I	—	—	—	377
Brede ..	39	—	6	4	—	—	—	—	—	1,211
Brightling ..	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	408
Broomhill ..	17	8	—	2	—	I	—	—	—	270
Burwash ..	151	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,027
Catsfield ..	33	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	730
Crowhurst ..	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	627
Dallington ..	10	—	I	—	—	—	—	—	—	348
East Guldeford ..	5	5	—	I	—	—	—	—	—	109
Etchingham ..	17	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	585
Ewhurst ..	6	—	—	I	I	—	—	—	—	822
Fairlight ..	5	—	I	—	—	—	—	—	—	932
Guestling ..	7	I	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	970
Hurst Green ..	31	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	760
Icklesham ..	88	8	3	I	2	I	—	I	—	1,794
Iden ..	16	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	431
Mountfield ..	30	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	622
Northiam ..	69	28	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,500
Ore ..	I	—	I	—	—	—	—	—	—	328
Peasmarsh ..	56	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	733
Penhurst ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	56
Pett ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	557
Playden ..	21	12	I	I	—	—	—	—	—	291
Rye Foreign ..	6	—	—	I	—	—	I	—	—	273
Salehurst ..	51	42	—	I	—	2	—	—	—	1,509
Sedlescombe ..	7	6	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	765
St. Thomas the Apostle, Win- chelsea ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	178
Ticehurst ..	96	35	—	10	—	I	—	I	I	2,385
Udimore ..	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	354
Westfield ..	58	6	4	I	—	—	—	—	—	1,494
Whatlington ..	11	2	—	I	—	—	—	—	—	266
Totals ..	1,051	214	29	29	3	7	I	2	I	

SEASONAL INCIDENCE OF NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Totals
Scarlet fever ..	5	2	—	2	4	8	3	3	—	—	2	—	29
Whooping cough	3	7	35	42	42	26	27	24	3	1	4	—	214
Acute poliomyelitis ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	2	1	1	7
Measles ..	204	523	233	46	24	13	3	2	2	—	—	1	1,051
Acute pneumonia	1	5	6	3	3	2	3	1	2	—	—	3	29
Acute encephalitis	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Erysipelas ..	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	3
Meningococcal infection ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Food poisoning ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
Totals ..	213	537	277	93	74	49	37	32	10	3	7	5	1,337

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

A commendable increase in the percentage of children immunised under five years is noted. There are still more than 25% remaining at risk. Regular and frequent communications to parents, giving dates and times of clinics in their own parishes, stress that this life-saving measure is only fully effective when their own particular children have received that protection which can be conferred by immunisation.

Figures for 1953

One hundred and fifty-nine clinics were held in 1953 (37 sessions). Number of children who received injections in 1953:

Primary Immunisation:

	<i>Under</i>							<i>Total</i>
	1 yr.	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	
Treated at clinics	35	57	9	3	4	29	10	147
By private doctors	117	80	8	1	1	4	1	212

Reinforcing injections:

Treated at clinics	—	—	—	1	57	327	71	456
By private doctors	—	—	—	—	9	55	27	91

Totals—Under 5 315
 5—14 (inc.) 44
 Reinforcing 547

Total number of children under 15 years of age, resident in the area, who had been immunised by 31st December, 1953:

Under 5 years	..	..	1,292
5—14 (inc.)	..	..	4,132
			—
			5,424
			—

Comparative figures for the past three years:

	1951	1952	1953
Number immunised under 5 years..	1,506	1,368	1,292
Child population (under 5) ..	2,289	2,081*	1,745*
Percentage of child population (under 5)	65.79%	65.73%	74.04%
Number immunised 5—14 (inc.) ..	3,915	4,143	4,132
Child population (5—14 inc.) ..	4,202	4,326*	4,329*
Percentage of child population (5—14)	93.16%	95.76%	95.44%

*Estimated—Registrar-General is unable to supply figures

Diphtheria Immunisation percentages for Schools.

School	No. on Register	No. Immunised	Percentage
Ashburnham C.P.	65	63	96.92
Battle V.P.	346	318	91.90
Beckley V.P.	59	57	96.61
Bodiam V.P.	55	50	90.90
Brede C.P.	88	81	92.04
Burwash V.P.	149	140	93.95
St. Philip's, Burwash Weald	71	70	98.59
Catsfield V.P.	67	63	94.02
Crowhurst V.P.	64	61	95.31
Dallington V.P.	42	38	90.47
Etchingham V.P.	30	29	96.66
Ewhurst V.P.	25	25	100.00
Fairlight V.P.	31	31	100.00
Guestling V.P.	54	52	96.29
Hurst Green V.P.	85	76	89.41
Icklesham V.P.	51	46	90.19
Mountfield and Whatlington V.P.	134	129	96.26
Netherfield V.P.	74	69	93.24
Northiam V.P.	108	104	96.29
Peasmarsh V.P.	77	71	92.20
Pett V.P.	24	17	70.83
Playden V.P.	42	38	90.47
Salehurst V.P.	182	166	91.20
Sedlescombe V.P.	96	91	94.79
Staplecross V.P.	46	45	97.82
Stonegate V.P.	42	42	100.00
Ticehurst V.P.	173	169	97.68
Udimore C.P.	46	46	100.00
Westfield C.P.	149	144	96.64
Winchelsea V.P.	82	74	90.24
	2,557	2,405	94.05
Attending private schools or schools outside the District	1,772	1,727	97.46

Comparative Percentages for the past three years :

	1951	1952	1953
Attending County Council Schools	93.11%	94.21%	94.05 %
Attending private schools or schools outside the district	93.23%	97.94%	97.46 %

VACCINATION

Numbers vaccinated reveal an increase and thus a reversal of the downward trend of last year. It is hoped that this more realistic outlook will be increasingly perpetuated in the future. The speed of air travel makes the likelihood of the introduction of smallpox an ever-present possibility.

The following persons were vaccinated in 1953:

	Under 1 yr.	1	2—4	5—14	15 or over	Total
Primary vaccination ..	248	9	15	9	15	296
Revaccination	—	—	4	22	94	120
Comparison with previous years:				1951	1952	1953
Total primary vaccinations .. ..	..	..	..	1,111	260	296
Total revaccinations .. ..	..	..	..	1,855	135	120
Number of babies born in 1953 .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	379
Number of babies under 1 year vaccinated in 1953 .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	248
Percentage vaccinated in 1953 .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	65.43%
Comparative percentages	1951	1952	1953			
	62.66%	58.91%	65.43%			

INFANT WELFARE CENTRES IN BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT

<i>Name and address of Centre</i>	<i>Sessions in month</i>
BATTLE: Church Hall	<i>Suspended</i>
BECKLEY: Parish Hall	First Tuesday in month. (Weighing sessions only)
BODIAM: Parish Room	Second Thursday in month.
BREDE and UDIMORE:	
The Hall, Broad Oak	Second Wednesday in month.
BURWASH: Congregational Hall ..	Fourth Thursday in month.
ETCHINGHAM: Village Hall	First Thursday in month. (Weighing sessions only)
FLIMWELL: Village Hall	Fourth Tuesday in month.
HURST GREEN: Village Hall	Second Tuesday in month.
IDEN and PLAYDEN:	
Memorial Hall, Peasmarsh	First Friday in month.
NORTHAM:	
Women's Institute Hall	Third Tuesday in month
ROBERTSBRIDGE:	
The Institute, Station Road	First and Third Tuesdays in month.
SEDLSCOMBE: Village Hall	First Thursday in month.
TICEHURST: Institute Hall	First Wednesday in month.
WESTFIELD: Church Hall	Third Tuesday in month.
WINCHELSEA: The New Hall	Second Friday in month.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

(a) PROVIDED BY THE EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL UNDER THE
AEGIS OF THE COUNTY MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

**(i) Ambulance Service*

			1951		1952		1953	
			Cases	Mileage	Cases	Mileage	Cases	Mileage
Illness	..	..	421	13,267	459	14,829	555	15,164
Accidents	..	..	97	2,289	131	3,092	117	2,967
			<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
			518	15,556	590	17,921	672	18,131
			<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

The St. John Ambulance Brigade continued to provide a first-class service in this District.

(ii) *Care of Expectant and Nursing Mothers and Children under School Age*

(iii) *Contraceptive Advice*

Subject to the limitation that advice is only given where pregnancy or childbirth is liable to be injurious to the health of the mother, arrangements are made for contraceptive advice to be given to married women at a clinic conducted by Hastings Corporation.

(iv) *District Nurses (Midwives) and Health Visitors*

(v) *Home Help Service*

(vi) *Hospital Car Service*

The Hospital Car Service in this county is provided entirely by the joint organisation of the British Red Cross Society and the St. John Ambulance Brigade. The Area Transport Office for this district is at 8 Endwell Road, Bexhill-on-Sea (Telephone Bexhill 125).

(vii) *Infant Welfare Centres*

See list of Centres on page 16.

**(viii) Immunisation and Vaccination Service*

Please refer to pages 14 and 16 for statistics.

(ix) *Mental Health Service*

(x) *Registration of Nursing Homes*

There are three efficiently-conducted registered Nursing Homes in this District.

(xi) *School Dental Service*

(xii) *School Medical Service (*Routine medical examinations including the assessment of handicapped pupils)*

*Delegated duties to the District Medical Officer of Health

(b) HOSPITALS

The following are the main hospitals providing accommodation and treatment for residents in the Battle Rural District:

Darvell Hall Sanatorium, Robertsbridge.
 Battle Hospital, Battle.
 Memorial Hospital, Rye Foreign
 Isolation Hospital, Tunbridge Wells.
 Royal East Sussex Hospital, Hastings (including V.D. Clinic).
 Mount Pleasant Isolation Hospital, Hastings.
 St. Helen's Hospital, Hastings.
 Fernbank Maternity Nursing Home, Hastings.
 Buchanan Hospital, St. Leonards-on-Sea.
 Eversfield Chest Hospital, St. Leonards-on-Sea.
 St. Mary's Hospital, Eastbourne.
 Princess Alice Hospital, Eastbourne.
 Gildredge Isolation Hospital, Eastbourne.
 Bexhill Hospital, Bexhill-on-Sea.
 Hellingly Hospital, Hellingly.
 Pembury Hospital, Pembury.
 Kent and Sussex Hospital, Tunbridge Wells.
 Fairlight Sanatorium, Fairlight.
 Cottage Hospital, Hawkhurst.
 Hill House, Rye Foreign.

They are all administered by the South-East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board through their respective Hospital Management Committees.

(c) PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE.

The facilities available at the Public Health Laboratory, Brighton, have been used extensively, and I am grateful to the Director (Dr. J. E. Jameson) for his help and co-operation.

(d) NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948

(I) *Section 47: Removal to Suitable Premises of Persons in Need of Care and Attention*

Fortunately, it was not found necessary to invoke these provisions during the year under review.

(II) *Section 50: Burial or Cremation of the Dead*

No action was necessary under this Section.

(e) HOME PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICE

During the period 1st April, 1953, to 31st March, 1954, 2,120 visits to 147 patients were made in Battle Rural District and the Borough of Rye, compared with 2,552 in the corresponding period of the previous year.

This service is much appreciated by all concerned.

(f) *National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children*

Liaison has been maintained.

CLEAN FOOD

The Sanitary Inspectors exercise perpetual vigilance throughout the District and every opportunity is taken to advise and educate the food handlers. This is achieved by personal inspections, interviews and the dissemination of relevant pamphlets and in this connection the new booklet, *Clean Catering*, published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, is especially valuable.

Protection of foodstuffs from flies and droplet infection sprayed by customers and staff onto exposed foods while awaiting disposal are continually being advocated.

The impervious plastic type working surfaces are a great help in hygienic food preparation and storage, their widespread use is strongly advised, ease of cleaning and lasting qualities are an eventual economy apart from the pleasing appearance.

Personal hygiene is stressed at all times; washing the hands after the use of the lavatory must be the cornerstone of all instructions to food handlers; owners of catering establishments are asked to co-operate by making this essential amenity easily available.

ICE CREAM

Eleven new premises were registered for the sale of ice cream during 1953, bringing the total to 126. Sixty-three registered premises sell the wrapped product. No ice cream is manufactured in the District.

The taking of ice cream samples is complicated by the necessity for packing samples in dry ice (not readily obtainable) prior to despatch by train to the Public Health Laboratory, Brighton. The time taken to collect a series of samples and their subsequent delivery to the Brighton Laboratory is so protracted that there is an ever-present likelihood that they will not arrive at the correct temperature. This time factor, plus the difficulty in obtaining dry ice at short notice, precludes the taking of "snap" samples from itinerant vendors.

Fortunately, the ice cream sold in this District is a product manufactured in Hastings or Bexhill, where regular sampling is undertaken by the local authorities at source.

I am greatly in favour of the wrapped product as this obviates the possibility of contamination by the retailer, either by unclean serving utensils or dubious personal hygiene.

INSPECTION OF MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

All animals destined for sale for human consumption are sent to the central slaughterhouse in Hastings, and meat inspection is thus limited to visiting butchers' shops. These visits are often made at the request of the butcher who has found some diseased condition when cutting up the meat.

The decontrol of meat rationing envisaged for 1954 will entail meat inspection at slaughterhouses within the District as against the present system of centralised slaughtering.

I am satisfied that the Sanitary Inspectors are well qualified to perform the onerous duty of preventing the possibility of the spreading of disease by persons eating diseased meat.

I am aware of the movement by the Veterinary Surgeons to have this duty allocated to them but with all respect cannot see how this procedure would increase the efficiency of the present system; in fact, it would be more likely to occasion a costly division of responsibility which would not ultimately be in the best interest of the consumer.

There should, however, be a Regional Specialist Veterinary Pathologist available on a consultative basis to whom the occasional unusual case could be submitted.

Food Found to be Unfit for Human Consumption

532 lb. 5 oz. beef	17 lb. 14 oz. tinned fish
19½ lb. pigs liver	35 lb. 13 oz. tinned vegetables
71½ lb. pork	66 lb. 12 oz. tinned fruit
38 lb. bullocks' head and tongue	23 lb. 7 oz. tinned soup
23 lb. 13 oz. bacon	24 lb. 15 oz. tinned milk
92 lb. 3 oz. tinned meat	9 lb. 6 oz. miscellaneous

MILK PRODUCTION

The following is a comparative estimate of the percentage of different types of milk produced in this District:

	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
T.T. milk	20%	29.3%	35.35%	41.0%	47.5%
Accredited milk ..	10%	5.4%	8.72%	5.1%	3.7%
Undesignated ..	70%	65.3%	55.93%	53.8%	48.8%

The policy of submitting samples of milk for biological testing in order to discover the presence of tuberculosis infection and brucellosis was continued.

Although the progressive increase in the percentage of T.T. milk is noted with satisfaction this is tempered in large measure by the fact that milk of this type is accepted as "safe" in all respects.

This assumption is a fallacy which should be dispelled, it is merely "safe" as regards the absence of Tubercle Bacilli, but it may, and sometimes does, contain other organisms which are injurious to health.

Twenty-four samples of milk were submitted for biological examination in order to test for Tubercle Bacilli and Brucellosis, the latter organism was found in two samples submitted from T.T. milk supplies.

In one case I received informal notification from a hospital that they were treating a patient suffering from Undulant Fever (*Brucella Abortus* infection, a non-notifiable disease). Investigation revealed that he had been in the habit of drinking raw milk from a T.T. herd; he eventually died and the post-mortem confirmed the presence of this disease. The case was published by me in an article which appeared in the *Medical Officer* on 9th April, 1954.

This is a warning that pasteurised milk is the only certain safe milk and that raw milks of any designation are liable to contain pathogenic organisms. The cream level is decreased by about $\frac{1}{7}$ th when pasteurised; however, this is not lost but merely disseminated throughout the milk, the nutritional value is not at all impaired.

There were five cases of tuberculosis in cattle; the diseased animals were slaughtered.

WATER SUPPLY

There are five Statutory Undertakings within the District:

<i>Undertaking</i>	<i>Parishes</i>
Battle Rural District Council . .	.. Battle, Crowhurst, Whatlington, Mountfield, Playden, Iden, Rye Foreign and part of Peasmarsh.
Hastings Corporation . .	.. Parts of Westfield, Guestling, Pett, Fairlight, Icklesham including Winchelsea and Rye Harbour, and part of Ore.
Heathfield and District Water Co. . .	.. Burwash, Etchingham, Hurst Green, Robertsbridge, Bodiam and Ticehurst.
Cranbrook and District Water Co. . .	.. Northiam.
Bexhill Corporation . . . . .	.. Ashburnham, Catsfield and part of Crowhurst.

The staffs of the Water Engineer's Department, Battle Rural District and Heathfield and District Water Co., were submitted for their annual blood testing in order to eliminate the possibility of a carrier state with consequent pollution of the water supply. This is arranged with the helpful co-operation of the Pathologist of the Royal East Sussex Hospital, Hastings. The results did not indicate any past or present disease likely to affect the purity of the water supply.

Other Piped Supplies

TOOT ROCK, PETT LEVEL

This small privately-owned supply serves 54 houses in the Pett Level area only. The source is a shallow well and the water of dubious purity in the raw state. It is, however, filtered and chlorinated and eight samples taken for bacteriological examination showed satisfactory results.

FAIRLIGHT COVE ESTATE WATER COMPANY

This company supplies filtered and chlorinated water to 78 properties on the estate and to 39 houses on the Warren Estate.

The company submitted eight reports during the year on samples of water; six were satisfactory. One sample failed to reach a satisfactory standard bacteriologically and one failed on account of turbidity.

Thirteen check samples were taken by the Council for bacteriological examination, all of which proved satisfactory.

The available raw water is variable in purity, and often inadequate in quantity; great care and vigilance to ensure adequate treatment must be exercised at all times.

In September the Company was advised that preliminary treatment in a settlement tank would assist subsequent purification but no action has yet been taken.

A major disappointment has been the failure of the company to agree with the Hastings Corporation on terms for the latter to take over this area of supply.

- (a) WARREN ESTATE. Thirty-nine houses on this estate depend on the Fairlight Cove Estate Water Company and as that company is often short of water for its own consumers, this Estate is sometimes without water for days.

The belief that the Fairlight Cove Estate Water Company would not oppose plans for supplying the Warren Estate with water from Hastings was proved wrong. Accordingly, the Council resolved that if agreement was not reached by 20th January, 1954, they would request Hastings Corporation to apply to the Minister of Housing and Local Government for an Order under Section 9 of the Water Act, 1945, to enable Hastings Corporation to supply this estate.

- (b) PETT WATER COMPANY. This is a small company which distributes water (when available) from the Fairlight Cove Estate Water Company to 15 houses in the Chick Hill area of Pett.

The Hastings Corporation have agreed with the Fairlight Cove Estate Water Company to take over this area, and at the end of December the Hastings water main had almost reached Chick Hill, ready for connections in the new year when Pett Water Company will cease to exist.

- (c) FIREHILLS ESTATE WATER COMPANY, FAIRLIGHT. This company restricts its filtered water supply to its own estate, comprising 102 houses, and operates a system of rationing during the summer months by supplying water to each of nine sectors in turn so that individual houses have their storage tanks filled once a day.

Eight samples of water were taken for bacteriological examination, of which seven proved satisfactory. One sample showed evidence of remote faecal pollution but this was satisfactorily remedied by attention to the filter and the check sample taken one week later gave an excellent result.

The following table summarises the results of bacteriological sampling of public supplies by this Authority:

<i>Undertaking</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
Toot Rock, Pett Level	8	0
Fairlight Cove Estate Water Company	13	0
Firehills Estate, Fairlight	7	1
Battle Rural District Council—Peas-		
marsh	12	2*

*Fault in treatment rectified, now satisfactory.

The main water supplies are not liable to Plumbo Solvent action.

Extension of Water Main to Whatlington

The main supply from Battle was extended as far as Home Place, Whatlington, the work being complete in November.

Peasmarsh Water Supply

An existing spring at Old House Farm revealed a wholesome and adequate supply of water thus enabling the building of 37 Council houses.

The works were completed in March, 1953, and 53 properties were connected to the main.

Water Surveys

MOAT LANE AND KENT STREET, WESTFIELD

A survey was made of the built-up area round Moat Lane and Kent Street, Westfield.

An existing private 4-in. main serving Claremont School might be extended to serve this area and discussions are proceeding on this basis with Hastings Corporation and the owners of the main.

CENTRAL PARISHES

In June, 1953, the Council decided to submit proposals to the Minister of Housing and Local Government for supplying the parishes of Ewhurst, Sedlescombe and Mountfield with water from a new bore to be sunk at Blackbrooks, Sedlescombe.

The scheme will cost £133,800. To obtain detailed evidence of the need for this scheme 658 houses were visited along the route of the proposed new main. Three hundred and thirty-nine were willing to connect to a new main, 245 were uncertain because of cost, etc., and 36 definitely would not connect. No answer could be obtained at 38 properties.

DISTRIBUTION OF PIPED WATER IN THE PARISHES

Parish	Properties directly connected to main			Premises supplied by meter		
	1953	1952	1951	1953	1952	1951
Ashburnham	38	38	—	—	—	—
Battle	1,316	1,280	1,224	148	145	142
Bodiam	127	127	127	—	—	—
Burwash	560	540	534	—	—	—
Catsfield	170	166	164	—	—	—
Crowhurst	175	175	169	37	37	41
Etchingam	218	213	213	—	—	—
Guestling*	267	159	100	—	—	—
Hurst Green	250	249	247	—	—	—
Icklesham (Winchelsea)	243	220	218	—	17	17
Icklesham (Rye Harbour)	111	111	111	—	17	17
Icklesham (Parish)	131	66	35	—	—	—
Iden	2	2	2	1	1	1
Mountfield	7	7	6	—	—	—
Northiam	372	369	361	17	17	16
Ore	78	64	64	—	—	—
Peasmarsh	53	—	—	1	1	—
Playden	61	51	44	7	6	7
Rye Foreign	20	19	19	4	3	3
Salehurst	470	469	452	—	—	—
Ticehurst	747	731	719	—	—	—
Westfield	261	219	205	—	—	—
Whatlington	18	4	4	—	—	—
Total	5,695	5,279	5,018	215	244	244

*Including the parishes of Pett, Fairlight and that part of Guestling known as Three Oaks

It will be observed that the great improvement in main water supplies follows the line of the main from Hastings in the direction of Camber, *i.e.* Guestling and Icklesham. The figure for Peasmarsh reflects the new supply from the recently completed water works in this parish.

WATER SAMPLES

Three hundred and five water samples were submitted for bacteriological examination during 1953, more than the totals of the previous two years added together. Two hundred and thirty were from wells, springs and rainwater tanks, the remainder being check samples from public and private main supplies.

This remarkable increase is due in some measure to the introduction of a comprehensive plan for regular sampling of public and semi-public supplies to schools, parish wells and springs, and Council houses not having main water. Most of these supplies had been sampled before sporadically but never as a regular routine measure on definite dates. The relevant tables show that a considerable number were found to be unsafe.

Wells and Springs

Water sampling and advice to householders, farmers, etc., on methods of improving individual supplies by protecting wells and springs has occupied a large proportion of the Sanitary Inspectors' time and reflects the great need for piped water throughout the District.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF WATER SAMPLES
(Supplies other than Public and Private Mains, including Delivered Water)

YEAR	SATISFACTORY		UNSATISFACTORY		TOTAL
	Wells and rain water tanks	Springs and streams	Wells and rain water tanks	Springs and streams	
1949 ..	19	7	45	11	82
1950 ..	33	14	55	24	126
1951 ..	18	12	30	60	120
1952 ..	53	11	52	4	120
1953 ..	82	30	104	14	230

WATER SAMPLES TAKEN FROM NEW AND SUSPECT SOURCES

PARISH	WELLS		SPRINGS	
	Satisfactory	Unsat'factory	Satisfactory	Unsat'factory
Ashburnham	—	1	—	—
Battle	1	1	—	—
Beckley	1	6	—	—
Brede	4	9	3	1
Brightling	4	—	—	—
Crowhurst	—	—	—	1
Dallington	4	9	—	—
East Guldeford	1	—	—	—
Etchingam	—	1	—	—
Ewhurst	2	4	2	—
Fairlight	1	3	1	—
Guestling	5	3	1	—
Icklesham	1	16	—	—
Iden	1	2	1	—
Mountfield	2	3	3	—
Northiam	1	—	—	—
Ore	3	4	—	—
Peasmarsh	1	—	1	2
Pett	16	6	—	—
Playden	—	1	1	—
Rye Foreign	—	1	2	—
Salehurst	—	—	1	—
Sedlescombe	2	2	—	—
Ticehurst	2	1	3	—
Udimore	—	1	3	—
Westfield	3	14	1	—
Totals ..	55	88	23	4

RAINWATER TANKS

Parish					Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Dallington	—	1
Mountfield	—	1
					—	2

SCHOOL WATER SUPPLIES

School	Results of Samples		Delivered water or well	Action taken and present position
	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory		
Beckley ..	1	1	Delivered	Tank cleaned out
Brede ..	3	3	Delivered	Tank cleaned out
Dallington ..	2	—	Well	Metafilter fitted. Satisfactory
Ewhurst ..	—	—	—	Adjacent satisfactory source utilised
Fairlight ..	2	—	Well	Metafilter in use
Mountfield and Whatlington	5	1	Delivered	Tank cleaned out
Peasmarsh ..	5	—	Well	Metafilter in use
Playden ..	3	—	Delivered	Satisfactory
Sedlescombe	—	1	Delivered	Tank cleaned out

Nineteen schools now have main water.

The school at Udimore is supplied by the spring serving the nearby housing estate, while the remaining eight schools depend on mate-filtered well water or delivered main water. These supplies were sampled with the results shown in the above table.

PARISH SPRINGS AND WELLS

Parish					Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Bodiam	..	..	..	..	0	1
Bowlers Town, Rye Foreign	..	..	..	..	0	3
Brede (Rectory Lane)	..	..	..	..	0	1
Sedlescombe	..	..	..	..	1	3
Whatlington	..	..	..	..	3	0
Winchelsea	..	..	..	..	0	1

The remarkable spring at Whatlington was the only parish supply which revealed a consistently good record.

The public spring at Winchelsea, found to be unsafe despite treatment, was closed. This action was possible because most of the houses in Winchelsea have main water; unfortunately, comparable action could not be taken in other parishes where a polluted source was the only supply. Warning notices were posted on the polluted springs or wells and the householders informed that all water intended for drinking and food preparation should be boiled.

WATER SAMPLES—COUNCIL HOUSES NOT ON MAIN WATER

	Tank (Delivered water)	Well	Spring	Result		Action taken
				Satis.	Unsat.	
Beckley ..	—	7	—	7	—	—
Brede (2 estates)	—	9	—	3	6	Warning notices posted " To boil "
Brightling ..	—	3	—	3	—	—
Dallington ..	—	3	—	1	2	Improvements to be ex- pedited. Warning no- tices posted
Ewhurst (incl. Staplecross) ..	7	3	—	10	—	—
Iden ..	4	—	—	4	—	—
Mountfield ..	2	—	—	2	—	—
Peasmarsh ..	1	2	—	2	1	—
Sedlescombe (3 estates) ..	—	5	—	—	5	Well to be improved. Warning notice posted
Udimore ..	—	—	4	3	1	Storage tank cleaned
	14	32	4	35	15	

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

(a) GUESTLING GREEN SEWAGE WORKS

This small works, completed in November, was installed primarily to serve the new housing estate. An additional short length of sewer was laid as far as Guestling House and was thus made available to serve Guestling School and private houses in the hamlet of Guestling Green.

(b) BURWASH SEWERAGE SCHEME

A starting date for this scheme had not been fixed when the year ended but tenders had been invited.

(c) TICEHURST SEWERAGE SCHEME

Work on the first instalment of this scheme started on 1st January, 1953, and made good progress. This part of the scheme will serve the Wardsbrook area, the Village, the Chequers housing site and the area northwards to the disposal works. An application was made to the Ministry for permission to continue with the second instalment, covering the area from Ticehurst to West Flimwell, and this was granted.

When this work is completed, the whole of the village, together with West Flimwell, will have both main water and main drainage.

(d) NORTHAM SEWERAGE SCHEME

After a Public Enquiry, on 20th February, 1953, sanction was obtained to proceed with part of the Northiam sewerage scheme which comprised the area of the main road from Farthing House to the treatment works adjoining the brickfield. The portion excluded would have served Ewhurst Lane and Dixter Lane.

Tenders were submitted to the Ministry for approval in November; approval is awaited.

(c) WINCHELSEA SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS

The antiquated works at Winchelsea became incapable of repair when the third and last settlement tank subsided, and the walls were extensively fractured.

A temporary fine screen was built as an emergency measure and the screened sewage passed direct to the river Brede.

The Council's Consulting Engineer commenced to prepare plans for new works on a site which had been carefully chosen in order to preserve the amenities of this ancient and delightful township.

(f) PEASMARSH SEWAGE WORKS

These works were constructed to replace an obsolete and inadequate installation, thus allowing council houses to be built in this parish, and coinciding with the provision of a main water supply.

(g) CAMBER SANDS

The position as outlined in my Annual Report for last year has, unfortunately, remained unchanged and my criticisms of the present situation are in no sense diminished.

The complete plans for the Sewerage Scheme for Camber Sands were presented to the Minister of Housing and Local Government and a public enquiry was held early in 1954.

REFUSE COLLECTION

A complete reorganisation of this service was inaugurated during 1953, resulting in a regular collection every 14 days in all but the most sparsely-populated areas where the interval is 16 days.

This was effected by a careful and time-consuming study of maps, time sheets, vehicles records and disposable labour. The plan was then submitted to the Public Health Committee, who agreed to the provision of one extra vehicle and a modest increment of labour during the holiday period in order to make the scheme possible.

The frequent complaints of the past have now given place to expressions of thanks which are well merited by the officials and staff concerned.

The Council's refuse tips at Battle, Winchelsea, Beckley, Guestling and Etchingham are under control, inspected and treated by the Council's rat-catcher and spread with insecticide when necessary.

The liquid soap dispensers, paper towels, etc., fitted to each vehicle, continue to ensure the health of the men by enabling them to wash their hands as necessary.

Salvage

The results of the year's collection are summarised below:

<i>Material</i>		<i>Tons</i>	<i>cwt.</i>	<i>qrs.</i>	<i>lb.</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Waste paper .. ..	..	70	0	0	0	280	0	0
Rags .. ..	..	5	5	1	0	111	7	6
Flock .. ..	..	0	0	1	0		3	0
Ferrous metals .. ..	..	28	16	0	0	106	0	0
Non-ferrous metals ..	..	2	14	0	0	145	19	2
		106	15	2	0	£643	9	8

CESSPOOL EMPTYING

The unsatisfactory situation deteriorated further during the year with the result that the Council approved the purchase of a cesspool emptier.

While tenders were being considered, the private firm carrying out this work was taken over by another firm which promptly made representations to the Council. The principals of this new firm appeared before the Public Health Committee and promised a greatly-improved service, agreeing to all provisions for prompt service and safe subsequent disposal; also a scale of fair charges. The Council deferred its own scheme for a trial period.

There were no further complaints of delay but many of high charges which places an unreasonable burden on householders and quite naturally, tempts them to delay using the service until such time as nuisances actually supervene.

In addition, I was not satisfied that the stringent precautions already referred to regarding the disposal of cesspool contents were being followed to the letter; occasional lapses, however infrequent, may lead to ill health of varying degree.

Having regard to the foregoing unsatisfactory position, I have no hesitation in recommending that the Council should provide a safe service at a reasonable rate, thus obviating danger to public health and possible exploitation of ratepayers.

INDUSTRIES

The numbers engaged in the main varied industries located in this District are given in the table on page 30.

Hop-pickers' Camps

The year 1953 was one of further improvement in the hop-pickers' camps and the weather was mainly fine.

The season commenced on 25th August and was completed towards the end of September, the pickers returning home on 26th September.

The Bodiam area alone received 3,460 men, women and children, all of whom were accommodated in huts with necessary amenities adjacent and suitably located.

Not a single complaint was received from pickers regarding their accommodation and those interviewed in the course of inspections expressed satisfaction.

The rebuilding of a substantial part of Park Camp by Messrs. A. Guinness & Sons marked a further stage in the improvement of their camps.

An increasing number of farmers use local labour for picking, preferring to incur costs for transport rather than maintain huts for "imported" pickers.

Hop-picking machines are now well established at Messrs. Guinness's gardens and the firm has well-equipped workshops and technicians able to repair and maintain the machines, which have to work continuously for long periods.

The machine is becoming increasingly efficient and it is evident that hand picking is approaching a decline.

Doctor H. M. Elliott, B.A., M.B., B.Ch., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., representing the Ministry of Health inspected the camps during hop-picking and subsequently a letter was received from the Minister expressing satisfaction in the general arrangements.

A case of poliomyelitis in a machine operator was notified; he made a complete recovery with no evidence of spread.

The general health of the pickers was good and there were no other cases of infectious disease.

NUMBERS ENGAGED IN THE MAIN INDUSTRIES

at 31st December, 1953

							<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Bakery .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	21	20	41
Beach works .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	47	—	47
Building trade .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	422	7	429
Concrete works .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	137	10	147
Egg packing station .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	14	16	30
Engineering works .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	250	18	268
Fencing contractors .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	19	3	22
Flour mills .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	44	16	60
Gypsum mines .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	654	14	668
Hop gardens (permanent staff—Guinness's) ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	93	4	97
Jam factory .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	19	36	55
Joinery Works .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	23	—	23
Laundries .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	13	53	66
Oil refining .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	—	4
Printing works .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	—	4
Sawmills .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	82	1	83
Sports ground contractors .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	35	1	36
Tannery .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	18	1	19
Wooden toy manufacturers .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	55	40	95

Working conditions were generally good and employers have co-operated where necessary.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

Twenty-seven inspections under the Factories Act, 1937, were made during the year, resulting in five Notices being served, the work was satisfactorily completed in four cases.

There are no Outworkers under Section 110 (1) (c) in this District.

NOTICES SERVED UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS

Number of Informal Notices outstanding at the end of 1952	..	187
Number of Informal Notices served during 1953	..	250
Number of Informal Notices complied with during 1953	..	165
Number of Informal Notices outstanding at end of 1953	..	272
Number of Statutory Notices outstanding at end of 1952	..	15
Number of Statutory Notices served during 1953	..	5
Number of Statutory Notices complied with during 1953	..	5
Number of Statutory Notices outstanding at end of 1953	..	15

ACTION UNDER THE HOUSING ACT, 1936

Dwelling-houses represented under Section 11	..	..	..	9
Demolition Orders made	..	..	..	9
Undertakings to repair	..	..	..	0
Undertakings not to relet	..	..	..	2
Houses demolished in compliance with orders	..	..	..	6
Houses made fit after representation	..	..	..	0

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936, AND HOUSING ACT, 1936

General Observations on the Year's Work

Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, was used in all cases where demolition had to be considered, whereas notices to secure repairs were served exclusively under the Public Health Act, 1936.

Nine houses were "represented" during the year and 14 others were dealt with at various stages of the procedure under Section 11 of the Housing Act.

Full particulars of the properties are given in the following table:

DETAILS OF ACTION UNDER SECTION 11 OF THE HOUSING ACT, 1936

Property	Action taken	Position at end of 1953
2, 3 and 4 Starrs Hill Cottages, Roberts-bridge.	Demolition Orders, May 1953. Owner appealed. Case adjourned till March 1954.	One still occupied.
46 High Street, Roberts-bridge.	Closing Order, 1951.	Two families still awaiting rehousing.
Alderswood, Burwash.	Undertaking not to relet, 1952.	Family rehoused.
Old School House, Winchelsea.	Demolition Order, January 1953.	Demolished November 1953.
3 Pond Cottages, Peasmarsh.	Undertaking not to relet received January 1953.	Vacant.
Sunshine Bungalow, Burwash.	Represented January 1953. Undertaking not to relet, March 1953.	Family rehoused.
Little Nortons, Westfield.	Represented January 1953. Demolition Order, February 1953.	Still occupied.
2 The Thorne, Guestling.	Represented April 1953	Still occupied.
1 and 2 Frymans Farm Cottages, Brede.	Represented April 1953.	One still occupied.
Kushigar, Pett.	Represented April 1953. Demolition Order, May 1953.	Still occupied.
Chapel Cottage, Pett.	Represented April 1953. Demolition Order, July 1953.	Still occupied.
Knole Cottage, Pett.	Represented April 1953. Demolition Order, July 1953.	Still occupied.
Franchise Lodge, Burwash.	Undertaking not to relet, 1951.	In process of reconstruction.
"Seascape," Camber Sands.	Represented July 1953.	Unoccupied. Family rehoused.
Ordinance Cottage, Winchelsea.	Represented November 1953. Demolition Order, December 1953.	Tenants offered Council Flat.
3-7 Maltheuses, Peasmarsh.	Represented 1952.	Demolished October-November 1953. Families rehoused.

HOUSING

Housing Provided by the Local Authority

1939	..	..	433
1946	..	..	437
1947	..	..	540
1948	..	..	698
1949	..	..	746
1950	..	..	831
1951	..	..	895
1952	..	..	993
1953	..	..	1,083 plus 24 under construction

The Council houses accommodate a population of approximately 5,000. One hundred and seventeen applicants were rehoused during 1953.

These figures reveal the great changes which have taken place in the property owning class, almost the only people building houses for letting purposes are the local authorities.

The tenants are representative of a broad cross-section of the population. An income of £750 a year does not automatically mean that the person concerned is able to afford to build a new house or purchase an existing property. It is becoming increasingly difficult for a person in this income group to save sufficient for the initial deposit while paying the taxes and dues which his position demands.

Section 4 of Part I of the Housing Act, 1949, will do much to help people in this category to own their own homes, thus making Council owned houses available to tenants who are more deserving of the subsidy which council-built houses carry.

The number of applicants on the Register is now 399, more than a third again of the number of houses already built and let.

There were 10,216 rated houses and flats in Battle Rural District at 31st December, 1953, and 10.6% of these were Council-owned houses, accommodating 16% of the population. Families with young children form the majority of council house tenants and so the council house average approaches five persons. The remaining properties accommodate an average of two to three persons, which is a reflection of the ageing population particular to this District (see relevant statistics). In addition, it is well known that this area is a favourite place for retirement, week-end cottages and summer residences.

As the population of this district has not materially increased over the years, one can only surmise that in the main the present occupants of council houses were living in overcrowded and substandard houses; a number have been demolished and many others extensively renovated before being relet.

It is evident that the general standard of housing has been vastly improved.

Council house improvements during the year:

Four dwellings connected to main water

Four dwellings provided with water closets.

Seventy-three still have earth closets. It is hoped to reduce this figure as the sewerage schemes in hand and under consideration proceed to completion.

Three Improvement Grants to private owners (Housing Act, 1949) were approved. This is another measure designed to raise the standard of housing for all classes.

Homeless families from other districts with residential and occupational qualifications have been given the same fair treatment as those with similar housing troubles who happen to have been born in the area. The intense parochialism noted occasionally in the past has not been in evidence and one is grateful that that possible element of bias has been eliminated and that hope can be extended to all applicants who fulfil the necessary requirements.

The integrity and stability of the present-day council house tenant is exemplified by the following table:

<i>Year ending</i>	<i>Total rent collectible</i>			<i>Percentage of arrears</i>
	£	s.	d.	
31st March, 1951	43,238	8	1	.29
31st March, 1952	52,393	12	10	.105
31st March, 1953	58,755	2	5	.004
31st March, 1954	66,918	9	10	.02

I would like to express my thanks to the Housing Committee and Mr. Harvey (Housing Manager) for their active co-operation in rehousing particular families who were living in conditions likely to be injurious to their health.

NEW DWELLINGS

New Dwellings Erected during 1953:

(a) By the Council:

	<i>Houses</i>	<i>Flats</i>	<i>Garages</i>	<i>Shop</i>
Battle	11	1	1	1
Guestling	21	—	—	—
Peasmarsh	37	—	—	—
Pett	4	4	—	—
Winchelsea	12	—	—	—
	85	5	1	1

(b) By private enterprise under licence .. 86

(c) By private enterprise (war destroyed) .. —

Conversions to dwellinghouses 6 new units

Houses in Course of Erection 31st December, 1953

(a) By the Council 24

(b) By private enterprise 61

COMPARATIVE TABLE—PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND LOCAL AUTHORITY

				PRIVATE ENTERPRISE		LOCAL AUTHORITY
				New dwellings	Conversions	
1949 .. ..	..	..	..	54	7	48
1950 .. ..	..	..	..	37	9	85
1951 .. ..	..	..	..	25	13	64
1952 .. ..	..	..	..	37	13	98
1953 .. ..	..	..	..	86	6	90

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS—COASTAL AREAS

The usual seasonal influx of caravans to the coastal areas kept one Sanitary Inspector fully employed as well as a Sunday roster of duties for two other Sanitary Inspectors.

Rigorous enforcement of the Public Health Act has been necessary to conserve the health of the people who have been attracted to this delightful coast.

Caravans were recorded on entry and kept under observation throughout their stay.

The Council were successful in proceedings against the owners of caravan sites in four cases.

HOUSE REQUISITIONING

Five properties were under requisition at 1st January, 1953. Two were de-requisitioned during the year.

BUILDING LICENSING

The Sanitary Inspectors continued to do all the inspections involved in administering the regulations controlling civil building, but this work became less onerous as controls were relaxed.

VISITS OF SANITARY INSPECTORS DURING 1953

Subject:

Drainage and sewage disposal	..	..	..	..	..	1,231
Water supplies	..	..	..	..	..	1,037
Milk and dairies	..	..	..	..	..	60
Building inspections	..	..	..	..	..	1,222
Hop-pickers' dwellings	..	..	..	..	..	68
Infectious diseases	..	..	..	..	..	86
Food premises	..	..	..	..	..	99
Housing and Public Health Acts	..	..	..	..	..	629
Moveable dwellings	..	..	..	..	..	551
Nuisances (not housing)	..	..	..	..	..	131
Verminous premises	..	..	..	..	..	13
Factories and workshops	..	..	..	..	..	27
Schools	..	..	..	..	..	30
Town planning	..	..	..	..	..	139
Rodent Control	..	..	..	..	..	2
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	791
Total						6,116

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

In May, 1953, as a measure of economy, the Council decided to dispense with the services of one rat-catcher, with the result that the remaining man has had to concentrate on dealing with complaints. It has, therefore, not been possible to continue the survey of agricultural land which made such good progress last year and the situation would have been very difficult indeed but for the improved rat poison, which has continued to give excellent results.

Attendants at refuse tips and sewage works were trained to use this poison and took over the routine treatment of their own sites, thus enabling the rat-catcher to concentrate on treating domestic premises.

His work has been much appreciated.

The table summarises the results of the operatives' work during the period January 1st, 1953, to April 1st, 1954.

	TYPE OF PROPERTY				Total
	Local Authority	Dwell- ing Houses	Agri- cultural	All other (including business and industrial)	
I. Total number of properties in Local Authority's District.	16	9,200 (approx.)	1,354 (approx.)	1,120 (approx.)	11,690
II. Number of properties inspected by the Local Authority during 1953 as a result (a) of notification, or (b) otherwise.	(a) —	374	34	52	460
	(b) 16	367	100	19	502
III. Number of properties (under II) found to be infested by rats.	Major 5	18	7	13	43
	Minor 11	423	2	44	480
IV. Number of properties (under II) found to be seriously infested by mice.	—	32	—	8	40
V. Number of infested properties (under III and IV) treated by the Local Authority.	16	473	9	65	563

METEOROLOGY

Rainfall Figures taken at Battle Water Works

Number of days on which rain fell .. 141
 Longest period of drought 32 days
 Period of drought 23rd February-26th March
 (inclusive)

Comparison with previous years is given in the following table:

Year	Total rainfall
1947	28.1 inches
1948	28.5 inches
1949	27.3 inches
1950	32.1 inches
1951	45.0 inches
1952	35.12 inches
1953	26.1 inches

Temperature

Highest recorded temperature for 1953 .. 87° on 25th May

Lowest recorded temperature for 1953 .. 14° on 7th February

(I am indebted to Mr. G. A. Bramley (Water Engineer) for this information.)